

In the Specification

Page1, line 25 to page 2, line 8:-

AS
A great deal of narrow band, typically voice, traffic is transported via the synchronous digital hierarchy (SDH) or the equivalent North American ~~SONET~~ SONET protocol. Further legacy systems employ the plesiochronous digital hierarchy (PDH). In such systems, digitised traffic from a large number of users is packed into virtual containers which are multiplexed up into synchronous or plesiochronous frames prior to transmission. The transmission is time division multiplex (TDM) based. There is thus a problem in adapting this synchronous or plesiochronous bulk traffic for transport over a cell-based asynchronous network, and re-adapting the transported traffic from the cell-based ATM back to the original TDM-based synchronous or plesiochronous transport. This is becoming an increasing problem in current TDM transmission systems which are moving towards higher orders of multiplexing and correspondingly higher bit rates in an attempt to improve traffic handling capacity.